

The Alliance Herald
TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

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CLEAN-UP WEEK.

About every so often, every city and town in the country has a clean-up week. Not since the days of "Spotless Town" has any succeeded in getting every alley and vacant lot, every back yard and every front yard to shining, but while lack of complete success would seem to be discouraging, actually every little bit accomplished helps stir up enthusiasm. Some day the average man will realize that not only for the sake of civic beauty, but as a protection to health and an up-builer of morals and morale, clean surroundings and fresh paint are invaluable. When the day comes that the public is thoroughly educated, clean-up campaigns will last three hundred and sixty-five days out of every year, and that's the length of time they ought to last.

As it is now, all of us are willing to overlook the pile of ashes in our own back yards, while our eyes seek the trash pile on our neighbor's lot. Paint costs money—and while we applaud the enterprise of the man who paints his house and barn, we hesitate to follow his example, even if we know that the paint will more than save its cost by retarding decay during the next ten years. A lackadaisical raking of the front yard, and lick and a promise at the back yard and a small bonfire may be all that we can nerve ourselves to do, but it all helps. The next year we may be encouraged to do a bit more. The value of a clean-up campaign is largely cumulative. One address on fire prevention doesn't accomplish much, but continued urging wears away the lazy resistance of the most careless householder.

The chamber of commerce and the city authorities deserve credit for the way they are tackling this problem. Even if the end of the week doesn't show a bright and shining Alliance and hundreds of yards of fresh paint, every heap of rubbish that is cleared away will mean so many million less flies to fight during the summer. This part of the country doesn't have the natural advantages of many others. There are fewer trees—the lawns are not so green—the winds now and then bring in new sand to cover the pavement. But if it takes ten years to awaken the civic consciousness in favor of keeping the city clean, painted and free from eyesores, it will be worth all the time it takes.

Stranger still is the fact that cleaning up sometimes arouses actual resentment. The Alliance Tennis club recently rented two or three vacant lots on one of the city's principal business streets. They are making it into a place that will be a credit to the city. They thought, when they started out, that the only toes they'd be treading upon would be those of tent shows and carnival companies. Unfortunately, these vacant lots have been used by a dozen farmers who tied their teams there on Saturday afternoons. No one disputes that the lots look better; no one disputes that there are places just as convenient to the horses, but some people have been crabbing because the team-owners weren't consulted. In the old days, the same wall went up when the hitching racks disappeared from the main streets of dozens of towns, but two years afterward not a voice was heard against the move. The Herald is in favor, if need be, of contributing to a fund to place horses in a feed barn while their owners are shopping here, but any old time a vacant lot can be cleaned up, let's do it.

A TAX ON TALK.

Heaven's choicest blessings upon the inventor. Suffering poverty, jeers and other unpleasant things, the inventor works on alone. And from Everett, Wash., comes the joyful news that will bring tears of gladness to nine out of ten people who subscribe to telephones. The tenth man—or more probably, woman—will utter maledictions, but if these pests should put in the rest of their lives cursing and bewailing their just retribution, they would never even up the score.

The inventor has come to the rescue of those of us who have suffered from the talkative voice on the wire. The Puget Sound Telephone company on April 1 installed telechrometers all over its system, and henceforth, unless the plant is wrecked by irate men and women drilligators, patrons in that fortunate city will pay for what they

say. The telechrometer, as its name implies, measures conversation. Those who talk by the yard will pay by the yard. Those whose conversational powers are unlimited will have to curb their natural inclinations or go into bankruptcy. Ah, sufferers on party lines, how beautiful, how splendid a future stretches before you in prospect.

And how sensible such a system is. Long moons ago, the telephone companies adopted this system on long distance calls. If they had tried to make a flat charge for long distance service, they would have been bankrupt. Street car systems have adopted zones; so has the postoffice. Every other thing is sold by the pound, the yard, the dozen or some definite measure. Only telephone talk is cheap.

The company didn't go into the telechrometer system without investigation. Numerous tests were made, and all of them showed the same thing—that the folks who did the most talking didn't pay for what they got. It was found that one business house having two lines used an average of ten minutes a day on both of them; another, with the same equipment, used an aggregate of 5,570 minutes. Yet both firms paid the same for phone service. On one four-party residential line, one subscriber used less than ten minutes monthly, while a neighbor used an aggregate of 2,040 minutes. This fact, the report says, was discovered by other subscribers to the party line long before the meter was installed.

Oh, the telechrometer is a blessing. It solves the problem of what to do with the telephone pests. Take our old friend, the listener-in. The telechrometer begins to work the minute the receiver is lifted from the hook. Thus, although the party-line listener cannot be prevented from snooping, at least those who are listened to can have the satisfaction of knowing that the listener will pay for what she hears—and it will undoubtedly cost her more than it is worth. The fellow who leaves the receiver down and forgets it will never do it more than once. With the company getting paid so much per word for all talking that is done, central will have less temptation to insist that the line is busy.

The Washington company is trying out the system for two months. Meantime, a world is waiting breathlessly—or nearly so—for the result of the try-out. If it works—but it must work, that's all there is to it. Such a boon to telephoning mankind cannot be allowed to fall into the discard.

THE REST CURE

W. V. Matthews, former president of the Pioneer State bank and the Guaranty Securities company of Omaha, which went to the wall through someone's mismanagement, is now an inmate of the state penitentiary. His is a sort of glorified incarceration, according to the newspaper reporters, just as his conviction was a sort of a martyrdom. Mr. Matthews, in a long statement which was printed in full by the newspapers, claimed that he was "guilty of no crime or wrongdoing, but had pleaded guilty to an embezzlement charge as the best means of holding the business together and saving most out of it for the benefit of those whose money had gone into it."

The court sentenced Mr. Matthews, reluctantly, to a year in jail. The prison authorities reluctantly received him. But it was plain to be seen that he could not mix with the common convicts, and he was immediately rated as a trusty and given some easy work in the storehouse. He ate in the regular prison dining room for a day or two, and he admits that he is "glad to have had that experience," but as a trusty he is permitted to dine with a few favored souls in the warden's kitchen. He wears a natty business suit of blue serge, with a blue cap and hose to match, russet shoes, neat negligee shirt and necktie.

When Mr. Matthews' duties as assistant prison steward are over for the

day, his time is his own. He comes and goes just like one of the prison officials, receives callers, his wife visits him once or twice a week, and on several occasions he has had his stenographer come to the penitentiary and take dictation. He is now organizing a holding company for the Guaranty Trust and is inviting, with the cooperation of his business associate, the two hundred stockholders in the concern to join.

Warden Fenton remarks that Matthews is a "very capable fellow—and a darned nice fellow, too." He must be. Aside from the fact that he is not permitted to leave the grounds and that his golf score must be suffering somewhat, Mr. Matthews must have hard work realizing that he is in jail. Perhaps a golf course can be built for him before long—he has served but six weeks of a year's sentence.

But what do the other convicts think of these privileges to a man with money? There's only one way of looking at it—either Mr. Matthews was guilty of embezzlement or he was innocent. The court took his plea of guilty and sentenced him. Mr. Matthews thinks it a vicarious martyrdom. The court must have believed him guilty or it would not have imposed a sentence upon him. If guilty of embezzlement, the best of intentions either before or after his sentence should not alter the fact that his prison term is intended as a punishment—not as a vacation.

Mr. Matthews had a better chance in life than ninety-nine out of a hundred of his fellow convicts. The privileges extended him show that he is being given that much advantage in making good. And this is a country where men are free and equal. Bunk!

GENIUS UNRECOGNIZED.

All amateur writers have harsh words to say of the critics who reject their manuscripts. Whenever you talk to one of these writers, you'll get an earful of such words as "favoritism," "incompetence," and others that are even worse, but when all is said and done, the critics, judging by the popularity of the magazines, seem to understand their jobs fairly well. At least they gauge the public taste with some accuracy, and while now and then some great work of art is delayed in reaching the public because the publishers' readers are stupid and stubborn, it's seldom that any masterpieces are lost to the world permanently. At least great authors all remind us that in the days before fame marked them for its own, every mail used to bring back rejected manuscripts.

Mrs. Bertha Greene, art supervisor in the Scottsbluff schools, who has contributed little bits of verse and life to the magazines at intervals, became convinced some time ago that the publishers and critics gave her efforts only the most superficial sort of an examination. And so she hatched a diabolical plot. She copied Wordsworth's "To the Daisy" and sent it to a St. Louis publishing house as her own. Back it came, bearing this criticism: "It seems to get nowhere, is rambling, lacking unity of thought."

And now Mrs. Greene is laughing wickedly, having convinced herself that her own poems have not been getting the attention they deserve. It's a little difficult to say whether this failure to recognize a product of unquestioned genius is sufficient evidence to warrant a conviction. Mrs. Greene should do as do all the other struggling writers—keep the mails hot with the manuscript until its worth has been appreciated. We refuse to condemn the publishers until we know whether the author sent this one poem alone, or with some of her own productions. Mayhap Wordsworth's "To a Daisy," was on the bottom of the pile. The criticism fits most amateur productions and even poets with a reputation might consider it as a caution. If the poor critic waded through half a dozen poems, his mind might be sufficiently clouded that he couldn't recognize genius if he met it face to face.

As to Wordsworth's poem, you may

read and decide for yourself whether the criticism is justified, it being understood that Wordsworth, who has long since gone to his reward, has no longer any worries as to the appreciation of his genius:

In youth from rock to rock I went,
From hill to hill in discontent
Of pleasure high and turbulent,
Most pleased when most uneasy;
But now my own delights I make,
My thirst at every rill can slake,
And Nature's love of thee partake,
Her much beloved daisy!

The winter in the garland wears,
That thinly deck his few gray hairs,
Spring parts the clouds with sootest
airs,
That she may sun thee;
Whole summer-fields are thine by right
And Autumn, melancholy wight!

Doth in thy crimson head delight
When rains are on thee.

HE DOESN'T KNOW

(World-Herald)

"Gosh," said Fatty Arbuckle, "I don't know what is all about, for I thought I was well started on my 'comeback.'"

He doesn't know that responsibility for the death of Virginia Rappe is only one count in the indictment against him before the court or public opinion.

He doesn't know that acquittal of the charge of manslaughter, largely on testimony that the dead girl was no better than he, doesn't absolve him from paying the penalty for offenses committed against common decency and morality.

He doesn't know that the profession which made him a national figure is

fighting to maintain its independence from legislative meddling and that to win that right it must shake off the incubus of those who understand so little what they owe to it.

He doesn't know that the order of Will Hays, guardian of the morals of the movies, is the best stroke of policy ever made to inspire confidence in the public that movie managers are honestly trying to develop a high standard for their art.

He doesn't know that easy money isn't a public license to indulge in a perpetual debauch of fast cars, fast women, bootleg booze and pajama parties.

He doesn't know that Fatty alone is responsible for the scandalous and disgraceful exposures which his friends saw only as "rotten publicity."

The poor count.

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